

# N.Z. COMMUNIST REVIEW

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**RECTIFY THE PARTY'S STYLE OF WORK: MAO TSETUNG**  
**YOUTH IN REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE**  
**PEOPLE'S WAR (GENERAL GIAP)**

MAY, 1973 — 20c



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# **The Struggle of Two Lines— the Law of Development and Unity of the Party**

— The National Secretariat, C.P.N.Z.

**W**ithin our Party as a whole, within each Party organisation and within each individual Party member, unceasing struggle will inevitably go on between correct, revolutionary ideas and incorrect ideas from capitalist society, i.e. between Marxist-Leninist ideology and bourgeois ideology. This is a world-wide phenomenon which finds clear expression in the great ideological struggle in the international Communist movement between Marxism-Leninism and modern revisionism.

The decision of our National Conference in 1963 reflecting the determination of the overwhelming majority of our membership to reject modern revisionism and stand firmly on the positions of Marxism-Leninism in the great ideological struggle in the world Communist movement was an important victory for revolutionary ideology which proved that Marxism-Leninism was the principal aspect of the principal contradiction in ideology within the C.P.N.Z.

But dialectics teaches us that contradiction, struggle, change, is absolute and permanent, while stability, the passive balance of opposing forces is relative and only temporary. Had we rested on our laurels, self-satisfied with the correct decision we took in 1963, counter-revolutionary opportunism would have become the principal aspect of the ideological contradiction, revisionism would have triumphed over Marxism-Leninism within our Party.

## **DECADE OF SHARP STRUGGLE**

The past decade, since 1963, has been marked by extremely sharp ideological struggles within the C.P.N.Z. as the class struggle manifested itself in accordance with this law of dialectics. The class enemy has made desperate attempts to subvert and destroy us as a revolutionary Party. It will never cease its efforts to do so.

The desertion of Jackson and Anderson, heading a minority heavily influenced by Soviet social-imperialism, occurred fairly soon after the defeat of modern revisionism at the 1963 National Conference. The trade union-parliamentary politics line of the Socialist Unity Party which they established with the support of the revision-

ist leadership of the Soviet Union, clearly demonstrates their bourgeois ideological position. The exposure and removal of this hostile trend within our ranks strengthened our Party.

Recognising that with the deepening of the crisis of imperialism the bourgeoisie would be driven to more and more desperate measures against the revolutionary forces, in 1967 we began a series of organisational changes aimed at reconstructing our Party in a form capable of coping with open fascist repression. By August, 1968, practice had proved that the scheme we had tried to implement was fundamentally wrong, was isolating the Party from the masses, and if continued, could only lead to the liquidation of the Party. It was a mistake of sectarianism, a denial of the revolution as the deed of the masses, and a demonstration of the existence of bourgeois influences in our ideology.

This deviation, however, did not mean that opportunism had become the principal aspect in our ideology as a whole. It had gained a temporary ascendancy in an important field, but once again the vast majority of our membership stood firm on Marxism-Leninism. A faction, headed by the leadership of the Wellington District Committee at that time, fought tooth and nail to continue this course towards liquidation, even going as far as to plot to take over the leadership of the entire Party, but they were exposed and defeated. Their breaching of democratic-centralism proved that an antagonistic contradiction had developed between them and Marxism-Leninism and they were eliminated from the Party.

It is important to note that while the former group was "Rightist" both in form and essence and the latter group was "Leftist" in form and "Rightist" in essence, both represented trends of bourgeois ideology within the C.P.N.Z. essentially hostile to Marxism-Leninism. Thus it was inevitable that a trend towards organisational reconciliation and integration between the members of these two groups would develop. This has already become apparent. In the long run, all the enemies of the revolution, from the lunatic fascists to the ultra-Leftists, will end up on the same barricade in open struggle against the Party.

### CONTRADICTIONS INEVITABLE

It would be a mistake, however, if we were to think that with the removal of these enemies from our ranks the ideological battle is now settled once and for all. This will never be the case throughout the entire historical era in which class society and the ideological contradictions stemming from class society continue to exist in the world.

The C.P.N.Z. operates under social-historical conditions which expose it constantly, every moment of every day, to intense ideological pressure from the imperialist bourgeoisie and the thousand and one petty-bourgeois influences deriving from the nature of the world we live in. To believe that we, as Communists, are immune



from these influences and that they do not find expression in our thinking, our Party work, methods and organisational forms, would be pure idealism. Every one of us is affected to some degree and the struggle against such influences is a permanent duty for every Communist.

But it would be a mistake of another kind to regard this struggle to overcome the traces of alien ideology in the minds of our comrades as an antagonistic struggle, a struggle between us and the class enemy. This is a contradiction within the ranks of the people, therefore it must be handled in the manner of "curing the disease to save the patient".

The main weapon in this struggle is the constant raising of the ideological-political level of every member through the integration of the principles of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete reality of New Zealand as it is revealed through the revolutionary practice of the C.P.N.Z. using Communist criticism and self-criticism to discover objective truth through analysis of practice with absolute honesty.

Having summed up the experience of the struggles between the two lines in the Party for more than fifty years, Mao Tsetung teaches us: "Practice Marxism and not revisionism; unite, and don't split; be open and above board and don't intrigue and conspire." These are the three basic principles to be followed in waging inner-party struggles.

### **SECTARIANISM, SUBJECTIVISM, STEREOTYPISM**

The Political Committee considers that sectarianism, subjectivism, and stereotypism, can be demonstrated in many aspects of our work. Sectarianism is expressed in trends to individualism, in putting the individual branch or locality before the district or the Party as a whole. The end result of this would be a sort of social-democratic federation of Communist groups in place of a disciplined, monolithic party with every member and every unit working to apply a united strategy. Subjectivism, seeing the part but not the whole, is very prevalent. How rarely do comrades in their criticisms of policies, party organs, or other members, make an objective assessment of all aspects of the subject, and how frequently do they express only, or mainly, just those aspects of which they approve or disapprove in the particular policy, party organ, or comrade. Stereotypism shows up in the dull routine of basic tasks carried out, without any striving for new methods to apply policy or approaches to new people, formalised book study and writing, divorced from the reality of revolutionary practice.

Our Party has come through many difficult tests triumphant. Marxism-Leninism is the principal aspect of our ideology, but the P.C. believes that we still have a great deal to do to ensure that our Party develops as a thoroughly disciplined, monolithic, revolutionary party of the new type that Lenin envisaged and built.

Serious study of the teachings of the Marxist-Leninist classics

in close relationship with the concrete problems which we face in the work of our Party can greatly assist us to find correct solutions to these problems. Therefore the P.C. has decided to reprint the article, "Rectify the Party's Style of Work", by Mao Tsetung as basic study material for every branch and every individual comrade. We believe that this study can play an important part in raising the ideological-political level of the whole Party so that we can build that "well disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, using the method of criticism and linked with the masses of the people . . ." which is the primary weapon with which we shall defeat the enemy.

—National Secretariat.

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## Rectify the Party's Style of Work

— MAO TSETUNG (February 1, 1942).

This speech was delivered by Comrade Mao Tsetung at the opening of the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

The Party School opens today and I wish it every success. I would like to say something about the problem of our Party's style of work.

Why must there be a revolutionary party? There must be a revolutionary party because the world contains enemies who oppress the people and the people want to throw off enemy oppression. In the era of capitalism and imperialism, just such a revolutionary party as the Communist Party is needed. Without such a party it is simply impossible for the people to throw off enemy oppression. We are Communists, we want to lead the people in overthrowing the enemy, and so we must keep our ranks in good order, we must march in step, our troops must be picked troops and our weapons good weapons. Without these conditions the enemy cannot be overthrown.

What is the problem now facing our Party? The general line of the Party is correct and presents no problem, and the Party's work has been fruitful. The Party has several thousand members who are leading the people in extremely hard and bitter struggles against the enemy. This is plain to everybody and beyond all doubt.

Then is there or is there not any problem still facing our Party? I say there is and, in a certain sense, the problem is quite serious.

What is the problem? It is the fact that there is something in

the minds of a number of our comrades which strikes one as not quite right, not quite proper.

### THE THREE MALADIES

In other words, there is still something wrong with our style of study, with our style in the Party's internal and external relations and with our style of writing. By something wrong with the style of study we mean the malady of subjectivism. By something wrong with our style in party relations we mean the malady of sectarianism. By something wrong with the style of writing we mean the malady of stereotyped Party writing. (1) All these are wrong, they are ill winds, but they are not like the wintry winds that sweep across the whole sky. Subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped Party writing are no longer the dominant styles, but merely gusts of contrary wind, ill winds from the air-raid tunnels. (Laughter). It is bad, however, that such winds should still be blowing in the Party. We must seal off the passages which produce them. Our whole Party should undertake the job of sealing off these passages, and so should the Party School. These three ill winds, subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped Party writing, have their historical origins. Although no longer dominant in the whole Party, they still constantly create trouble and assail us. Therefore, it is necessary to resist them and to study, analyse and elucidate them.

**Fight subjectivism in order to rectify the style of study, fight sectarianism, in order to rectify the style in Party relations, and fight Party stereotypes in order to rectify the style of writing — such is the task before us.**

To accomplish the task of overthrowing the enemy, we must accomplish the task of rectifying these styles within the Party. The style of study and the style of writing are also the Party's style of work. Once our Party's style of work is put completely right, the people all over the country will learn from our example. Those outside the Party who have the same kind of bad style will, if they are good and honest people, learn from our example and correct their mistakes, and thus the whole nation will be influenced. So long as our Communist ranks are in good order and march in step, so long as our troops are picked troops and our weapons good weapons, any enemy, however powerful, can be overthrown.

### SUBJECTIVISM

Let me speak now about subjectivism.

Subjectivism is an improper style of study; it is opposed to Marxism-Leninism and is incompatible with the Communist Party. What we want is the Marxist-Leninist style of study. What we call style of study means not just style of study in the schools but in the whole Party. It is a question of the method of thinking of comrades in our leading bodies, all cadres and Party members, a question of



our attitude towards Marxism-Leninism, of the attitude of all Party comrades in their work. As such, it is a question of extraordinary indeed of primary, importance.

Certain muddled ideas find currency among many people. There are, for instance, muddled ideas about what is a theorist, what is an intellectual and what is meant by linking theory and practice.

Let us first ask, is the theoretical level of our Party high or low? Recently more Marxist-Leninist works have been translated and more people have been reading them. That is a very good thing. But can we therefore say that the theoretical level of our Party has been greatly raised? True, the level is now somewhat higher than before. But our theoretical front is very much out of harmony with the rich content of the Chinese revolutionary movement, and a comparison of the two shows that the theoretical side is lagging far behind. Generally speaking, our theory cannot as yet keep pace with our revolutionary practice, let alone lead the way as it should. We have not yet raised our rich and varied practice to the proper theoretical plane. We have not yet examined all the problems of revolutionary practice — or even the important ones — and raised them to a theoretical plane. Just think, how many of us have created theories worthy of the plane on China's economies, politics, military affairs or culture, theories which can be regarded as scientific and comprehensive and not crude and sketchy? Especially in the field of economic theory: Chinese capitalism has had a century of development since the Opium War, and yet not a single theoretical work has been produced which accords with the realities of China's economic development and is genuinely scientific.

Can we say that in the study of China's economic problems, for instance, the theoretical level is already high? Can we say that our Party already has economic theorists worthy of the name? Certainly not. We have read a great many Marxist-Leninist books, but can we claim, then, that we have theorists? We cannot. For Marxism-Leninism is the theory created by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin on the basis of practice, their general conclusion drawn from historical and revolutionary reality. If we merely read their works but do not proceed to study the realities of China's history and revolution in the light of their theory or do not make any effort to think through China's revolutionary practice carefully in terms of theory we should not be so presumptuous as to call ourselves Marxist theorists. Our achievements on the theoretical front will be very poor indeed if, as members of the Communist Party of China, we close our eyes to China's problems and can only memorise isolated conclusions or principles from Marxist writings.

**If all a person can do is to commit Marxist economics or philosophy to memory, reciting glibly from Chapter I to Chapter X, but is utterly unable to apply them, can he be considered a Marxist theorist? No! He cannot.**

What kind of theorists do we want? We want theorists who can, in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist stand, viewpoint and method, correctly interpret the practical problems arising in the course of history and revolution and give scientific explanations and theoretical elucidations of China's economic, political, military, cultural and other problems. Such are the theorists we want. To be a theorist of this kind, a person must have a true grasp of the essence of Marxism-Leninism, of the Marxist-Leninist stand, viewpoint and method and of the theories of Lenin and Stalin on the colonial revolution and the Chinese revolution, and he must be able to apply them in a penetrating and scientific analysis of China's practical problems and discover the laws of development of these problems. Such are the theorists we really need.

The Central Committee of our Party has now made a decision calling upon our comrades to learn how to apply the Marxist-Leninist stand, viewpoint and method in the serious study of China's history, and of China's economics, politics, military affairs and culture, and to analyse every problem concretely on the basis of detailed material and then draw theoretical conclusions. This is the responsibility we must shoulder.

**Our comrades in the Party School should not regard Marxist theory as lifeless dogma. It is necessary to master Marxist theory and apply it, master it for the sole purpose of applying it.**

If you can apply the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint in elucidating one or two practical problems, you should be commended and credited with some achievement. The more problems you elucidate and the more comprehensively and profoundly you do so, the greater will be your achievement. Our Party School should also lay down the rule to grade students good or poor according to how they look at China's problems after they have studied Marxism-Leninism, according to whether or not they see the problems clearly and whether or not they see them at all.

## THE QUESTION OF THE INTELLECTUALS

Next let us talk about the question of the "intellectuals". (2) Since China is a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country and her culture is not well developed, intellectuals are particularly treasured. On this question of the intellectuals, the Central Committee of the Party made the decision (3) over two years ago that we should win over the great numbers of intellectuals and, insofar as they are revolutionary and willing to take part in the resistance to Japan, welcome them one and all. It is entirely right for us to esteem intellectuals for without revolutionary intellectuals the revolution cannot triumph. But we all know there are many intellectuals who fancy themselves very learned and assume airs of erudition without realising that such airs are bad and harmful and hinder their own progress. They ought to be aware of the truth that actually many so-called intellectuals are, relatively speaking, most ignorant and the

workers and peasants sometimes know more than they do. Here some will say, "Ha! You are turning things upside down and talking nonsense". (Laughter). But, comrades, don't get excited; there is some sense in what I am saying.

**What is knowledge? Ever since class society came into being the world has had only two kinds of knowledge, knowledge of the struggle for production and knowledge of the class struggle. Natural science and social science are the crystallisations of these two kinds of knowledge, and philosophy is the generalisation and summation of the knowledge of nature and the knowledge of society. Is there any other kind of knowledge? No.**

Now let us take a look at certain students, those brought up in schools that are completely cut off from the practical activities of society. What about them? A person goes from a primary school of this kind all the way through to a university of learning. But all he has is book-learning; he has not yet taken part in any practical activities or applied what he has learned to any field of life. Can such a person be regarded as a completely developed intellectual? Hardly so, in my opinion, because his knowledge is still incomplete. What then is relatively complete knowledge? All relatively complete knowledge is formed in two stages; the first stage is perceptual knowledge, second is rational knowledge, the latter being the development of the former to a higher stage. What sort of knowledge is the students' book-learning? Even supposing all their knowledge is truth, it is still not knowledge acquired through their own personal experience, but consists of theories set down by their predecessors in summarising experience of the struggle for production and of the class struggle. It is entirely necessary that students should acquire this kind of knowledge, but it must be understood that as far as they are concerned such knowledge is in a sense still one-sided, something which has been verified by others but not yet by themselves. What is most important is to be good at applying this knowledge in life and in practice. Therefore, I advise those who have only book-learning but at yet no contact with reality, and also those with little practical experience, to realise their own shortcomings and become a little more modest.

How can those who have only book-learning be turned into intellectuals in the true sense? The only way is to get them to take part in practical work and become practical workers, to get those engaged in theoretical work to study important practical problems. In this way our aim can be attained.

### **MARX — A FULLY DEVELOPED INTELLECTUAL**

What I have said will probably make some people angry. They will say, "According to your explanation, even Marx would not be regarded as an intellectual." I say they are wrong. Marx took part in the practice of the revolutionary movement and also created revolutionary theory. Beginning with the commodity, the simplest



element of capitalism, he made a thorough study of the economic structure of capitalist society. Millions of people saw and handled commodities every day but were so used to them that they took no notice. Marx alone studied commodities scientifically. He carried out a tremendous work of research into their actual development and derived a thoroughly scientific theory from what existed universally. He studied nature, history and proletarian revolution and created dialectical materialism, historical materialism and the theory of proletarian revolution.

**Thus Marx became a most completely developed intellectual, representing the acme of human wisdom; he was fundamentally different from those who have only book-learning. Marx undertook detailed investigations and studies in the course of practical struggles, formed generalisations and then verified his conclusions by testing them in practical struggles — this is what we call theoretical work.**

Our Party needs a large number of comrades who will learn how to do such work. In our Party there are many comrades who can learn to do this kind of theoretical research; most of them are intelligent and promising and we should value them. But they must follow correct principles and not repeat the mistakes of the past. They must discard dogmatism and not confine themselves to ready-made phrases in books.

### **THEORY**

There is only one kind of true theory in this world, theory that is drawn from objective reality and then verified by objective reality; nothing else is worthy of the name of theory in our sense. Stalin said that theory becomes aimless when it is not connected with practice. (4). Aimless theory is useless and false and should be discarded. We should point the finger of scorn at those who are fond of aimless theorising. Marxism-Leninism is the most correct, scientific and revolutionary truth, born out of and verified by objective reality, but many who study Marxism-Leninism take it as lifeless dogma, thus impeding the development of theory and harming themselves as well as other comrades.

On the other hand, our comrades who are engaged in practical work will also come to grief if they misuse their experience. True, these people are often rich in experience, which is very valuable, but it is very dangerous if they rest content with their own experience. They must realise that their knowledge is mostly perceptual and partial and that they lack rational and comprehensive knowledge; in other words, they lack theory and their knowledge, too, is relatively incomplete. Without comparatively complete knowledge it is impossible to do revolutionary work well.

**Thus, there are two kinds of incomplete knowledge, one is ready-made knowledge found in books and the other is knowledge that is mostly perceptual and partial; both are one-sided. Only an**



**integration of the two can yield knowledge that is sound and relatively complete.**

In order to study theory, however, our cadres of working-class and peasant origin must first acquire an elementary education. Without it they cannot learn Marxist-Leninist theory. Having acquired it, they can study Marxism-Leninism at any time. In my childhood I never attended a Marxist-Leninist school and was taught only such things as, "The Master said: 'How pleasant it is to learn and constantly review what one has learned.'" (5) Though this teaching material was antiquated, it did me some good because from it I learned to read. Nowadays we no longer study the Confucian classics but such new subjects as modern Chinese, history, geography and elementary natural science, which, once learned, are useful everywhere. The Central Committee of our Party now emphatically requires that our cadres of working-class and peasant origin should obtain an elementary education because they can take up any branch of study, politics, military science or economics. Otherwise, for all their rich experience they will never be able to study theory.

It follows that to combat subjectivism we must enable people of each of these two types to develop in whichever direction they are deficient and to merge with the other type. Those with book-learning must develop in the direction of practice; it is only in this way that they will stop being content with books and avoid committing dogmatist errors. Those experienced in work must take up the study of theory and must read seriously; only then will they be able to systematize and synthesize their experience and raise it to the level of theory, only then will they not mistake their partial experience for universal truth and not commit empiricist errors. Dogmatism and empiricism alike are subjectivism, each originating from an opposite pole.

**Hence there are two kinds of subjectivism in our Party, dogmatism and empiricism. Each sees only a part and not the whole. If people are not on guard, do not realise that such one-sidedness is a short-coming and do not strive to overcome it, they are liable to go astray.**

However, of the two kinds of subjectivism, dogmatism is still the greater danger in our Party. For dogmatists can easily assume a Marxist guise to bluff, capture and make servitors of cadres of working-class and peasant origin who cannot easily see through them; they can also bluff and ensnare the naive youth. If we overcome dogmatism, cadres with book-learning will readily join with those who have experience and will take to the study of practical things, and then many good cadres who integrate theory with experience, as well as some real theorists, will emerge. If we overcome dogmatism, the comrades with practical experience will have good teachers to help them raise their experience to the level of theory and so avoid empiricist errors.

## **"SHOOTING THE ARROW AT THE TARGET"**

Besides muddled ideas about the "theorist" and the "intellectual", there is a muddled idea among many comrades about "linking theory and practice", a phrase they have on their lips every day. They talk constantly about "linking", but actually they mean "separating", because they make no effort at linking. How is Marxist-Leninist theory to be linked with the practice of the Chinese revolution? To use a common expression, is it by "shooting the arrow at the target". As the arrow is to the target, so is Marxism-Leninism to the Chinese revolution. Some comrades, however, are "shooting without a target", shooting at random, and such people are liable to harm the revolution. Others merely stroke the arrow fondly, exclaiming, "What a fine arrow! What a fine arrow!", but never want to shoot it. These people are only connoisseurs of curios and have virtually nothing to do with the revolution. The arrow of Marxism-Leninism must be used to shoot at the target of the Chinese revolution. Unless this point is made clear, the theoretical level of our Party can never be raised and the Chinese revolution can never be victorious.

**Our comrades must understand that we study Marxism-Leninism not for display, nor because there is any mystery about it, but solely because it is the science which leads the revolutionary cause of the proletariat to victory.**

Even now, there are not a few people who still regard odd quotations from Marxist-Leninist works as a ready-made panacea which, once acquired, can easily cure all maladies. These people show childish ignorance, and we should enlighten them. It is precisely such ignorant people who take Marxist-Leninism as a religious dogma. To them we should say bluntly, "Your dogma is worthless." Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin have repeatedly stated that our theory is not a dogma but a guide to action. But such people prefer to forget this statement which is of the greatest, indeed the utmost, importance. Chinese Communists can be regarded as linking theory with practice only when they become good at applying the Marxist - Leninist stand, viewpoint and method and the teachings of Lenin and Stalin concerning the Chinese revolution and when, furthermore, through serious research into the realities of China's history and revolution, they do creative theoretical work to meet China's needs in different spheres.

Merely talking about linking theory and practice without actually doing anything about it is of no use, even if one goes on talking for a hundred years. To oppose the subjectivist, one-sided approach to problems, we must demolish dogmatist subjectiveness and one-sidedness.

So much for today about combating subjectivism in order to rectify the style of study throughout the Party.

## SECTARIANISM

Let me now speak about the question of sectarianism.

Having been steeled for twenty years, our Party is no longer dominated by sectarianism. Remnants of sectarianism, however, are still found both in the Party's internal relations and in its external relations. Sectarian tendencies in internal relations lead to exclusiveness towards comrades inside the Party and hinder inner-Party unity and solidarity while sectarian tendencies in external relations lead to exclusiveness towards people outside the Party and hinder the Party in its task of uniting the whole people. Only by uprooting this evil in both respects can the Party advance unimpeded in its great task of achieving unity among all Party comrades and among all the people of our country.

What are the remnants of inner-Party sectarianism? They are mainly as follows:

First, the assertion of "independence". Some comrades see only the interests of the part and not the whole; they always put undue stress on that part of the work for which they themselves are responsible and always wish to subordinate the interests of the whole to the interests of their own part.

They do not understand the Party's system of democratic centralism; they do not realise that the Communist Party not only needs democracy but needs centralisation even more. They forget the system of democratic centralism in which the minority is subordinate to the majority, the lower level to the higher level, the part to the whole and the entire membership to the Central Committee.

Chang Kuo-tao asserted his "independence" of the Central Committee of the Party and as a result "asserted" himself into betraying the Party and became a Kuomintang agent. Although the sectarianism we are now discussing is not of this extremely serious kind, it must still be guarded against and we must do away completely with all manifestations of disunity. We should encourage comrades to take the interests of the whole into account. Every Party member, every branch of work, every statement and every action must proceed from the interests of the whole Party; it is absolutely impermissible to violate this principle.

### THE "ME FIRST" DOCTRINE

Those who assert this kind of 'independence' are usually wedded to the doctrine of "me first" and are generally wrong on the question of the relationship between the individual and the Party. Although in words they profess respect for the Party, in practice they put themselves first and the Party second. What are these people after? They are after fame and position and want to be in the limelight. Whenever they are put in charge of a branch of work, they assert their "independence". With this aim, they draw some people in, push others out and resort to boasting, flattery and touting among the comrades, thus importing the vulgar style of the

bourgeois political parties into the Communist Party.

**It is their dishonesty that causes them to come to grief. I believe we should do things honestly, for without an honest attitude it is absolutely impossible to accomplish anything in this world.**

Which are the honest people? Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin are honest, men of science are honest. Which are the dishonest people? Trotsky, Bukharin, Chen Tu-hsiu and Chang Kuo-tao are extremely dishonest; and those who assert "independence" out of personal or sectional interests are dishonest too. All sly people, all those who do not have a scientific attitude to their work, fancy themselves resourceful and clever, but in fact they are most stupid and will come to no good. Students in our Party School must pay attention to this problem. We must build a centralised, unified Party and make a clean sweep of all unprincipled factional struggles. We must combat individualism and sectarianism so as to enable our whole Party to march in step and fight for one common goal.

### **OUTSIDE AND LOCAL CADRES**

Cadres from the outside and those from the locality must unite and combat sectarian tendencies. Very careful attention must be given to the relations between outside and local cadres because many anti-Japanese base areas were established only after the arrival of the Eighth Route Army or the New Fourth Army and much of the local work developed only after the arrival of outside cadres. Our comrades must understand that in these conditions it is possible for our base areas to be consolidated and for our Party to take root there only when the two kinds of cadres unite as one and when a large number of local cadres develop and are promoted; otherwise it is impossible. Both the outside and the local cadres have their strong and weak points, and to make any progress they must overcome their own weak points by learning from each other's strong points. The outside cadres are generally not up to the local cadres in familiarity with local conditions and links with the masses. Take me for instance. Although I have been in northern Shensi five or six years, I am far behind the local comrades in understanding local conditions and in links with the people here. Our comrades going to the anti-Japanese base areas in Shansi, Hopei, Shantung and other provinces must pay attention to this.

Moreover, even within the same base area, owing to the fact that some districts develop earlier and others later, there is a difference between the local cadres of a district and those from outside it. Cadres who come from a more developed to a less developed district are also outside cadres in relation to that locality, and they, too, should pay great attention to fostering and helping local cadres. Generally speaking, in places where outside cadres are in charge, it is they who should bear the main responsibility if their relations with the local cadres are not good. And the chief comrades in



charge should bear greater responsibility. The attention paid to this problem in some places is still very inadequate. Some people look down on the local cadres and ridicule them, saying, "What do these locals know? Clodhoppers!" Such people utterly fail to understand the importance of local cadres, they know neither the latter's strong points nor their own weaknesses and adopt an incorrect, sectarian attitude. All outside cadres must cherish the local cadres and give them constant help and must not be permitted to ridicule or attack them. Of course, the local cadres on their part must learn from the strong points of the outside cadres and rid themselves of inappropriate, narrow views so that they and the outside cadres become as one, with no distinction between "them" and "us", and thus avoid sectarian tendencies.

The same applies to the relationship between cadres in army service and other cadres working in the locality. They must be completely united and must oppose sectarian tendencies. The army cadres must help the local cadres, and vice versa. If there is friction between them, each should make allowance for the other and carry out proper self-criticism. Generally speaking, in places where army cadres are actually in positions of leadership, it is they who should bear the main responsibility if their relations with the local cadres are not good. Only when the army cadres understand their own responsibility and are modest in their attitude towards the local cadres can the conditions be created for the smooth progress of our war effort and our work of construction in the base areas.

### **SELFISH DEPARTMENTALISM**

The same applies to the relationship among different army units, different localities and different departments.

**We must oppose the tendency towards selfish departmentalism by which the interests of one's own unit are looked after to the exclusion of those of others.**

Whoever is indifferent to the difficulties of others, refuses to transfer cadres to other units on request, or releases only the inferior ones, "using the neighbour's field as an outlet for his overflow", and does not give the slightest consideration to other departments, localities or people — such a person is a selfish departmentalist who has entirely lost the spirit of communism. Lack of consideration for the whole and complete indifference to other departments, localities and people are characteristics of a selfish departmentalist. We must intensify our efforts to educate such persons and to make them understand that selfish departmentalism is a sectarian tendency which will become very dangerous, if allowed to develop.

### **OLD AND NEW CADRES**

Another problem is the relationship between old and new cadres. Since the beginning of the War of Resistance, our Party has grown enormously, and large numbers of new cadres have emerged;

that is a very good thing. In his report to the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B.), Comrade Stalin said, "... there are never enough old cadres, there are far less than required, and they are already partly going out of commission owing to the operation of the laws of nature". Here he was discussing the cadres situation and only the laws of nature.

If our Party does not have a great many new cadres working in unity and co-operation with the old cadres, our cause will come to a stop. All old cadres, therefore, should welcome the new ones with the utmost enthusiasm and show them the warmest solicitude. True, new cadres have their shortcomings. They have not been long in the revolution and lack experience, and unavoidably some have brought with them vestiges of the unwholesome ideology of the old society, remnants of the ideology of petty-bourgeois individualism. But such short-comings can be gradually eliminated through education and tempering in the revolution. The strong point of the new cadres, as Stalin has said, is that they are acutely sensitive to what is new and therefore enthusiastic and active to a high degree — the very qualities which some of the old cadres lack. (6).

**Cadres, old and new, should respect each other, learn from each other and overcome their own shortcomings by learning from each others' strong points, so as to unite as one in the common cause and guard against sectarian tendencies. Generally speaking, in places where the old cadres are mainly in charge, it is they who should bear the chief responsibility if relations with the new cadres are not good.**

All the above — relations between the part and the whole, relations between the individual and the Party, relations between outside and local cadres, relations between army cadres and other cadres working in the locality, relations between this and that army unit, between this and that locality, between this and that department and relations between old and new cadres — are relations within the Party. In all these relations it is necessary to enhance the spirit of communism and guard against sectarian tendencies, so that the ranks of our Party will be in good order, march in step and therefore fight well. This is a very important problem which we must solve thoroughly in rectifying the Party's style of work. Sectarianism is an expression of subjectivism in organisational relations; if we want to get rid of subjectivism and promote the Marxist-Leninist spirit of seeking truth from facts we must sweep the remnants of sectarianism out of the Party and proceed from the principle that the Party's interests are above personal or sectional interests, so that the Party can attain complete solidarity and unity.

### **EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

The remnants of sectarianism must be eliminated from the Party's external as well as its internal relations. The reason is this: we cannot defeat the enemy by merely uniting the comrades

throughout the Party, we can defeat the enemy only by uniting the people throughout the country. For twenty years the Communist Party of China has done great and arduous work in the cause of uniting the people of the whole country and the achievements in this work since the outbreak of the War of resistance are even greater than in the past. This does not mean, however, that all our comrades already have a correct style in dealing with the masses and are free from sectarian tendencies. No. In fact, sectarian tendencies still exist among a number of comrades and in some cases to a very serious degree.

Many of our comrades tend to be overbearing in their relations with non-Party people, look down upon them, despise or refuse to respect them or appreciate their strong points. This is indeed a sectarian tendency. After reading a few Marxist books, such comrades become more arrogant instead of more modest and invariably dismiss others as no good without realising that in fact their own knowledge is only half-baked.

**Our comrades must realise the truth that Communist Party members are at all times a minority as compared with non-Party people. Supposing one out of every hundred persons were a Communist, then there would be 4,500,000 Communists among China's population of 450,000,000. Yet, even if our membership reached this huge figure, Communists would still form only one per cent of the whole population, while 99 per cent would be non-Party people.**

What reason can we then have for not co-operating with non-Party people? As regards all those who wish to co-operate with us or might co-operate with us, we have only the duty of co-operating and absolutely no right to shut them out. But some Party members do not understand this and look down upon, or even shut out, those who wish to co-operate with us. There are no grounds whatsoever for doing so. Have Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin given us any grounds? They have not. On the contrary they have always earnestly enjoined us to form close ties with the masses and not divorce ourselves from them. Or has the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China given us any grounds? No. Among all its resolutions there is not a single one that says we may divorce ourselves from the masses and so isolate ourselves. On the contrary, the Central Committee has always told us to form close ties with the masses and not to divorce ourselves from them. Thus action divorcing us from the masses has no justification at all and is simply the mischievous result of the sectarian ideas some of our comrades have themselves concocted. As such sectarianism remains very serious among some of our comrades and still obstructs the application of the Party line, we should carry out extensive education within the Party to meet this problem. Above all, we should make our cadres really understand how serious the problem is and how utterly impossible it is to overthrow the enemy and attain the goal of the revolution unless Party members unite with non-Party cadres and with

non-Party people.

**All sectarian ideas are subjectivist and are incompatible with the real needs of the revolution; hence the struggle against sectarianism and the struggle against subjectivism should go on simultaneously.**

There is no time today to talk about the question of stereotyped Party writing; I shall discuss it at another meeting. Stereotyped Party writing is a vehicle for filth, a form of expression for subjectivism and sectarianism. It does people harm and damages the revolution, and we must get rid of it completely.

## **MATERIALISM AND DIALECTICS**

To combat subjectivism we must propagate materialism and dialectics. However, there are many comrades in our Party who lay no stress on the propaganda either of materialism or of dialectics. Some tolerate subjectivist propaganda and regard it with equanimity. They think they believe in Marxism but make no effort to propagate materialism and do not give it a thought or express any opinion when they hear or read subjectivist stuff. This is not the attitude of a Communist. It allows many of our comrades to be poisoned by subjectivist ideas, which numb their sensitivity. We should therefore launch a campaign of enlightenment within the Party to free the minds of our comrades from the fog of subjectivism and dogmatism and should call upon them to boycott subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped Party writing. Such evils are like Japanese goods, for only our enemy wishes us to preserve them and continue to befuddle ourselves with them; so we should advocate a boycott against them, just as we boycott Japanese goods. We should boycott all the wares of subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped Party writing, make their sale difficult, and not allow their purveyors to ply their trade by exploiting the low theoretical level in the Party.

**Our comrades must develop a good nose for this purpose; they should take a sniff at everything and distinguish the good from the bad before they decide whether to welcome it or boycott it. Communists must always go into the whys and wherefores of anything, use their own heads and carefully think over whether or not it corresponds to reality and is really well founded; on no account should they follow blindly and encourage slavishness.**

Finally, in opposing subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped Party writing we must have in mind two purposes: first, "learn from past mistakes to avoid future ones", and second, "cure the sickness to save the patient".

The mistakes of the past must be exposed without sparing anyone's sensibilities; it is necessary to analyse and criticise what was bad in the past with a scientific attitude so that work in the future will be done more carefully and done better. This is what is meant by "learn from past mistakes to avoid future ones".



**But our aim in exposing errors and criticising shortcomings, like that of a doctor curing a sickness, is solely to save the patient and not to doctor him to death.**

A person with appendicitis is saved when the surgeon removes his appendix. So long as a person who has made mistakes does not hide his sickness for fear of treatment or persist in his mistakes until he is beyond cure, so long as he honestly and sincerely wishes to be cured and to mend his ways, we should welcome him and cure his sickness so that he can become a good comrade. We can never succeed if we just let ourselves go and lash out at him. In treating an ideological or a political malady, one must never be rough and rash but must adopt the approach of "curing the sickness to save the patient", which is the only correct and effective method.

I have taken this occasion of the opening of the Party School to speak at length, and I hope comrades will think over what I have said.

## NOTES

(1) Stereotyped writing, or the "eight-legged essay", was the special form of essay prescribed in the imperial examinations under China's feudal dynasties from the 15th to the 19th centuries; it consisted in juggling with words, concentrated only on form and was devoid of content.

The "eight - legged essay" became a by - word in China denoting stereotyped formalism and triteness. Thus "stereotyped Party writing" characterises the writings of certain people in the revolutionary ranks who piled up revolutionary phrases and terms higgledy-piggledy instead of analysing the facts. Like the "eight-legged essay", their writings were nothing but verbiage.

(2) The term "intellectuals" refers to all those who have had middle school or higher education and those with similar educational levels.

(3) This was the decision on recruiting intellectuals adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on December 1939, which is printed under the title "Recruit Large Numbers of Intellectuals" in the Selected Works of Mao Tsetung, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1965, Vol. II, pp. 301-3.

(4) See J. V. Stalin, "The Foundations of Leninism" (April-May 1924).

(5) This is the opening sentence of the Confucian Analects, which consists of dialogues between Confucius and his disciples.

(6) See J. V. Stalin, "Report to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. (B) on the work of the Central Committee" (March 10, 1939).

# Role of Youth in Revolutionary Struggle

(Contributed)

**T**hroughout history all repressive regimes have dreaded young people in action and sought to control them. The paranoid Nazis and fascists put the youth in brown or black shirts and incited them in a rampage of violence against the Jews and the Left. All means are justified to check the revolutionary movement among the youth.

Today, any and every method of corruption or diversion is secretly or openly sanctioned by the ruling monopolies. While expressing shock at the excesses of a section of young people — the gang warfare and indulgence in sex and drugs — the lords of finance-capital and their representatives in parliament praise and protect the system which spawns the familiar evils of crime and decadence of our times.

**Today's revolutionary youth are awakening and uniting in struggle, more and more directing their fire against that arch-enemy of the peoples — U.S. imperialism. Disgusted with the humbug and hypocrisy of the capitalist politicians, they are challenging the old order, its petrified conventions, authoritarianism, bankrupt policies and barbarous wars.**

The upsurge among the youth is a world-wide phenomenon. The heroic struggle of the French students in Paris and other places in France in 1968, shook French capitalism to its foundations. Displaying boundless initiative and courage, youth have fought the cops in the streets, occupied faculties and offices and run their own universities. A revolutionary shock force, the youth have detonated powerful strike movements among the working class and stirred other strata, professional sections and farmers, into struggle.

Youth are distinguished from the older generation by their enthusiasm and energy, candour and idealism. Least of any tied to the habits and traditions of private property and the "least conservative in their thinking" (Mao Tsetung), they are more prepared for sacrifice, even giving their lives, for the cause they believe in.

However, it would be wrong to idealise youth as a whole and regard young people as a class in itself. Class interests affect the youth as they do among adults. The children of the bourgeoisie are favoured by the privileges and opportunities which are the fruit of wealth and power. On the other hand, working class youth are more likely to carry with them those qualities which distinguish the class into which they were born — class loyalty and consciousness tenacity and discipline. It is this section of the youth who are most

likely to develop revolutionary, vanguard qualities.

Reflecting their insecure class position, middle class youth are relatively unreliable and unstable. Various counter-revolutionary trends in the working class movement — revisionism, Trotskyism and anarchism — emanate from this class. Nevertheless, many middle class youth can be won over to the proletarian and Marxist-Leninist standpoint and outlook and no effort should be spared to win their allegiance and support for the revolutionary cause and tasks.

## **CONTROL OF THE YOUTH — A CLASS ISSUE**

The bourgeoisie and its state want the youth to grow into solid supporters of the existing social order. The whole economic system and its super-structure — laws, radio, news media, education etc. — is geared to this end. There are the established youth organisations, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, youth clubs, marching girls etc. Badges and titles of merit and rank encourage competitiveness, individualism and rivalry and trips to the U.S. ensure that the keener types will champion the glorious “free world” of capitalism.

Modern developments like the “Jesus” movement and stage shows adapted to contemporary rebellious moods of the youth, mesmerise and divert the youth for brief periods. Religion is an important weapon of ideological control and class oppression. An ideological drug, its effect is to confuse the youth and swing them away from class struggle and revolutionary action.

**Growing numbers of young people today can see no bright future under the rule of the bourgeoisie, under capitalism and imperialism. There is only the prospect of corruption, degradation and decay in life and culture, increased exploitation and oppression, unemployment and broken homes, aggressive wars for the sacred profit of the monopolies.**

So it was the youth who played a decisive and heroic part in the Viet Nam movement, braving the boots of the cops in the streets, who were right then! And it was the “Old Men” politicians, mouthpiece for the monopolies and Wall Street financiers, who were wrong! Therefore, who will dare to challenge the right of militant youth to rebel? Who is prepared to face up to their questions on what was their role and attitude during U.S. imperialism’s monstrous war of aggression against Viet Nam?

## **TWO ROADS**

The monsters of Auschwitz and Buchanwald were once young. But as they grew up they were moulded into useful tools of their rulers. the giant monopolies of Krupp and Thyssen.

So sooner or later, youth will be faced with a choice of embarking on one of two roads—servants of reactionary decadent forces, or young fighters in the proletarian army.

## THE DRUG SCOURGE

The capitalist rulers, for their own interests, take some cognisance of the dangers of the spread of drug-taking and severe penalties are imposed on drug pushers. They are compelled to keep drugs under some measure of control (ineffective though such measures are, in fact under the conditions of imperialism). On the other hand, drug addiction by a small section of youth swept into the wake of the militant youth movement, may be quietly welcomed, even actively encouraged, since this can provide a means of penetrating the movement with the aim of sapping revolutionary will and smashing its organisation.

**On this question the attitude of the Party and the progressive and revolutionary youth must be decisively unequivocal and strict. In the interests of both the physical health of members and the aims and security of the organisation, the politically-advanced youth will have no alternative but to firmly exclude all drug-takers (including those who take pot and hash) from the organisation. There can be no room for tolerance and liberalism here.**

The rights and demands of the revolutionary struggle supersede any alleged "rights" of the individual.

## ILLUSIONS AND REALITY

In the last decade a spate of books, plays, films etc. have come out about the youth, analysing their values, trends, cults and styles. Few get down to basic class issues. We are led to believe that these are no longer significant, classes are "disappearing", have become "fragmented".

All kinds of diversions and pseudo-revolutionary ideologies have sprung up like mushrooms to bemuse and side-track the youth. Pacifism, Guevarism and various Trotskyist trends are promoted and encouraged in various ways. There is emphasis on the Trotskyist line using the Mandel approach in university lectures. Marcuse and Cohen Bendit ("the spontaneous revolution") are two other fairly well-known diversionary ideologies.

**Undoubtedly, all these false trends need to be combatted. However, practice is the test of theory and only in practice will they be finally discredited and Marxism-Leninism accepted as the only correct guide to revolutionary action.**

On occasions the bourgeoisie is prepared to accede to change and reforms on issues which don't constitute any serious challenge. indeed, promoting illusions about bourgeois democracy and "freedom" is good policy and investment if people, including youth, can be made to think they are getting somewhere and this is the correct road to social improvement. But of course, this is the road of reformism which brings about no fundamental changes in society and the social system.

## SYMBOLS OF REVOLT

In some ways youth have established their right to indivi-



duality and independence as in their hair length and mode of dress, sometimes only won in the teeth of hidebound conservatism through collective action. Nevertheless, these symbols of opposition to or rejection of hallowed customs, conventions and fashions have to some extent lost their former radical significance. They have become formalised and commercialised. Today, what is unusual about beads and beards?

The form is not necessarily a true reflection of the content. This can be seen in the manner in which the bourgeoisie cleverly exploits for its own ends new trends and tastes of the youth in music, art and literature. Lacking any genuine revolutionary or proletarian qualities, much of the cultural junk (some of it put over in the guise of "art", "mature" or "progressive" thought), aimed at the youth reflects merely the inherent rottenness, deceit and degeneration of bourgeois society.

**Behind the "Playboys" "progressive" stage shows, paperbacks, films and pop music which flood the cultural scene sit the millionaires and monopolies raking in the profits.**

There is nothing in the bourgeois stream of cultural filth that will re-make the world; only an avenue for license, diversion and escapism.

### THE PARTY AND THE YOUTH

The Party has a responsibility to educate the youth, educate them in Marxist-Leninist ideology, the spirit of class struggle and proletarian internationalism. But this is a two-way process. At the same time the Party learns from those youth who are blazing new paths in revolutionary struggle and enriches its theory.

The Party has no motive but to enhance and develop the revolutionary struggle. It is not a question of domination or control but one of assistance and guidance.

Radical and revolutionary-minded youth have a responsibility to learn from the Party, from its tested cadres who have rich experience, and the great treasure-house of Marxism-Leninism.

**Mao Tsetung said: "How should we judge whether a youth is revolutionary? How can we tell? There can only be one criterion, namely, whether or not he is willing to integrate himself with the broad masses of workers and peasants and does so in practice".**

Whether or not they display the popular symbols of their generation — long hair, jeans and jandals — will the youth unite with the workers in their struggles, fight for their common class aims and demands? Any youth or student who presumes to know all the answers will inevitably at some stage, have to face this test of their class outlook.

"New Left" student intellectuals need to have contact with apprentices and young workers in industry. Both need knowledge of Marxism-Leninism as a guiding light in the fog of anti-Marxist anti-working class ideas which pervade life and society under capitalism.

## **"LEFT" ORGANISATIONS**

Revolutionary and militant youth must necessarily be concerned with the problem of organisation without which there can be no significant movement. It means persistent, patient, detailed, day-to-day work. A militant, revolutionary organisation is neither a camping ground for hippies nor a sort of junior version of the Party. Observing basic working class principles and objectives and giving correct ideology and leadership its proper emphasis, elaborate rules should not be required.

It is important to study the sectarian errors of earlier youth organisations which tended to cater to the more advanced youth and failed as a result to overcome their sectarian isolation.

The Party must acknowledge some degree of responsibility for errors of this period.

In non-party organisations, Party members earn by work and correct leadership their right to positions of influence and trust in them. The Party's influence is ideological and should recognise both in theory and in practice the organisational independence of the organisation. The key principle is the winning of conviction on policies, methods of work and courses of action, not carrying the argument by means of coercion or mechanical majorities. The Party should strive for unanimous agreement as to the correct road forward.

Organisational problems, in general, will be solved by the youth themselves through practice and the class struggle. Only thus can they be fully grasped and solved. The theorists will not find the answers through academic debate. The essential thing is action and practice out of which correct theory (and policies) will arise.

The revolutionary youth and the P.Y.M. in particular, have over the last few years, performed a valuable service in raising the level of struggle and in helping to expose the main enemy, U.S. imperialism. A new unity among progressive youth and other sections has as a result been built on this basis. At the same time, they have learnt (and assisted others to learn) the difference between true and false friends and revisionism from true Marxism-Leninism.

Among Party cadres there still remain a number of mistaken attitudes and prejudices, in some cases deeply ingrained. Some tend to be on the one hand, too protective and on the other, unduly harsh when mistakes are made. Youth, it is true, need guidance but advice proffered in a paternal "I know it all" manner will often provoke only opposition and resentment. Being more active or audacious than the "oldies" some mistakes are bound to be made by the youth. It is necessary for older cadres to exercise the utmost patience and understanding.

Some may say: "How can they (the youth) influence people when they look so ragged and unkempt?" We may recall that it was a certain National Party politician who coined the phrase,

"those scruffy-looking protesters". Who indeed, but the Right wingers would care to echo this attitude? No, certainly the young people, whatever their mode of dress — torn shirts or patched jeans — in the struggles over Viet Nam and apartheid in which they have played a vital vanguard role, have been a major influence on people and events.

Undoubtedly our revolutionary youth, if they persist in their work will, through practice find the correct path which will lead to expansion and growth.

**Hail to our heroic and revolutionary youth, a vital force in the political struggle who will certainly march on to new victories.**

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# People's War

## Part Two

### THE TRUNG SISTERS

The national consciousness and patriotism of our people in this period was clearly expressed in uprisings, the most representative of which was that of the Trung Sisters in 40-43, at the beginning of the Christian era. The outstanding characteristic of this uprising, which started at Me Linh in present-day Ha Tay province, was the "unanimous response" of the mandarins — both military and civilian — and the people in all "the sixty-five districts and citadels," that is the whole territory of our country at that time. That "unanimous response" of the entire country rallying behind the national-salvation banner of the Trung Sisters was indeed a rare occurrence in any country's history. It can be said to be "a chain uprising", a popular insurrection bespeaking the national feeling of the mandarins and people in the tribes that made up the old Au Lac.

After the fall of the independent state of Van Xuan, during three centuries, our people kept up their struggle and staged repeated insurrections, the national movement grew still more ebullient in the 10th century. Relying on this upsurge and taking advantage of the weakening of the Tang dynasty shaken by incessant peasant uprisings in China, and the disgrace and murder of the Tang governor Khuc Tua Zu, with the support of the people, mounted an insurrection, proclaimed himself governor and restored national sovereignty. For several decades, this administration faced up to many hard trials and was at times overcome by the enemy. Not until 938, when Ngo Quyen defeated the Southern Han army of aggression on the Bach Dang river did our people really regain independence. This naval battle, in which Ngo Quyen used war junks and iron-tipped wooden piles planted in the river bed and adopted bold and imagi-

native tactics, testified to the fighting ability and degree of development of our national army at that time. The 13th century historian Le Van Huu highly praised Ngo Quyen for having "used a newly-levied Viet army to crush the myriad men of Liu Huang-tao", "devised efficient stratagems and fought magnificently", "recovered national independence and proclaimed himself king", thus forcing the enemy to give up all attempts at reconquest.

### CONSOLIDATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The Bach Dang victory marked a great turning point in our national history, when our people had won back complete independence and was to build and develop an ever more prosperous feudal nation, consolidating and safeguarding this independence for many consecutive centuries.

The "every citizen a soldier" system was conceived and gradually perfected by successive dynasties.

This arming of the entire people was quite unusual in feudal times but it was very necessary for a small nation fighting foreign aggression.

Relying on the "every citizen a soldier" system, the feudal state set up various categories of troops; royal troops at the central level, regional troops, troops of the feudal lords and tribal chieftains of the ethnic minorities and local troops in the hamlets and villages. The royal troops made up the "Army of the Son of Heaven" under the Dinh and Le, the "Royal Guard" under the Ly and Tran. They correspond to the standing or regular army of our days.

As for the military forces in the countryside, farmers in peace time, called up in case of aggression", they were called the "external army", comparable to present-day reserve forces. The huong binh and tho binh served in peace time to maintain the rule of the feudal state in the village and hamlets. In war time they joined with the entire people in the fight against the foreign aggressors, thus forming the broad armed forces of the masses.

Whereas in the ten centuries of struggle for independence, our armed forces chiefly consisted of the broad masses of insurgents, in the period of construction and consolidation of national independence, the national armies played a prominent role in national defence and in patriotic wars. They were the regular armies of the independent feudal state and were better organised with every passing year. The army of the Ly was composed of infantry, cavalry, elephant-riding troops and navy. Besides spears and lances, bows and cross-bows, they were also equipped with stone-hurling catapults. The army of the Tran had a kind of cannon.

Even in those ancient times, our people paid great attention to the equipment of their armies and relied on the level of productive forces to devise very effective weapons and war means. They also attached great importance to food supplies, "regarding the feeding of the soldiers as a matter of vital importance". The regular forces



were small in number but well-trained and could, in war time, be expanded very quickly. Training was given particular attention. Tran Quoc Tuan compiled Binh thu yeu luoc (Essentials of Military Art) and Van Kiep tong bi Truyen thu (Secrets of Van Kiep).

### **THE MONGOLIAN AGGRESSION**

In the three wars of resistance against the Mongols in the 13th century, thanks to the regular army and huong binh and tho binh forces organised on the "every citizen a soldier" principle, Tran Quoc Tuan efficiently combined big-unit, large-scale actions of the regular army with small-unit, on-the-spot activities of the local and popular forces from beginning to end. The regular army, obviously played a direct and decisive role. Many brilliant annihilation battles were fought by it in Dong Bo Dau, HamTu, Chuong Zuong, Van Kiep, Bach Dang . . . However, the armed masses also grew continually and their role was also very important. The people in the mountain areas intercepted, pinned down and did away with an important portion of the enemy's forces. In the plains, the popular forces, relying on their villages and hamlets, fought the enemy wherever he came.

Since very early times, our people already knew how to rely on the villages to fight. These may be said to be a kind of "combat villages". The masses also practiced scorched earth tactics, greatly hindering enemy supply. The inscription Sat that (Death to the Invaders) tattooed on the arms of every officer and soldier expressed the great determination of our people to resist the enemy and endure every sacrifice. It was really a war fought by the entire people, the entire country, a people's war in feudal times.

**The Mongol armies of aggression which had scoured Europe and Asia, conquered and erased from the world map many countries, suffered ignominious defeats in all their three invasions of Viet Nam.**

### **LIBERATION WAR UNDER LE LOI AND NGUYEN TRAI**

In the middle of the 14th century, the decadent Tran kings increased repression and exploitation of the people. Uprisings by peasants and domestic slaves repeatedly broke out during nearly half a century. Taking advantage of the disturbances, Ho Quy Ly usurped the throne and set up the Ho dynasty. The people were alienated. The war of resistance organised by Ho Quy Ly against the Ming aggressors relied solely on the regular army and on improved war means and heavily fortified citadels, not on the people. Consequently, it failed.

But the aggressors could not subjugate our people. Many insurrections immediately broke out.

Le Loi launched an uprising at Lam Son with barely 2,000 troops at the start. The insurrection soon developed into a war of liberation. The insurgent army was supported by the armed people. As the insurrection gradually developed into a war of liberation, the

insurgent forces became a regular army.

The success of the resistance against the Mings was that of a people's war under the leadership of Le Loi and Nguyen Trai. But unlike the patriotic wars under the Tran, it was a national insurrection which later developed into a liberation war. "It was characterised by the expansion of insurgent forces into a regular army, combined with widespread uprising by the masses. "Once the insurrectional flag was raised, the people in the four corners of the country rose up like swarms of bees". Concerning the tactics used, there were "attacks like thunder and lightning" but there were also small actions, like that of "ants boring through dikes".

After victory, Le Loi and Nguyen Trai quickly reconstructed the country and took the centralised feudal regime to a new, higher stage of development.

### **THE TAY SON UPRISING**

The feudal regime in our country entered a period of decadence in the 16th century. For over two hundred years, feudal factions were engaged in disastrous fratricidal wars.

Many large-scale peasant uprisings and peasant wars erupted one after another, especially in the 18th century, climaxing in the Tay Son uprising led by Nguyen Hue.

**This upheaval marked a new high in insurrections and wars, in the combination of armed masses with the army in our country.**

It originated from a peasant movement developing into a national movement, from the close combination of these two movements at a time when the decadent feudal class had bowed to the aggressors and the national-salvation banner had passed to Nguyen Hue, a national hero and an outstanding leader of the peasant movement. All that gave a fresh and very powerful impulse to the peasant movement and national war of that time.

The Tay Son insurrection — a peasant movement developing into a national movement and relying on the widespread armed uprisings of the masses and a very powerful army — toppled three reactionary native feudal cliques, fought off two foreign aggressions, reunited the country and preserved the independence of the nation.

**It was indeed a remarkable exploit, a grandiose achievement of our revolutionary peasantry and our nation, without precedent in our national history and also very rare in the history of peasant movements in other countries.**

### **FRENCH AGGRESSION**

At the beginning of the 19th century, on the threshold of modern times, our people were confronted with an extremely serious challenge. French imperialism began its conquest of our country. It was a new enemy, a Western capitalist power with a great economic and military potential, unlike the foreign feudal aggressors of the past. The native feudal regime had long been declining and the feudal class has ceased to be the force of progress in national history,

instead had become very reactionary and was plunging Vietnamese society into chaos and decadence. The feudal state kept hurling its army against rebelling peasants. The army of the feudal state had completely turned into an opponent of the people and had lost all support from them. The peasants mounted hundreds of revolts of various sizes against the harsh rule and bloody repression of the feudal class.

Faced with the aggression of French imperialism, with the threat of servitude looming larger and larger, the peasants launched widespread uprisings but the Nguyen feudalists refused all reforms and continued to repress the people. To preserve their selfish class interests, they chose to surrender to the aggressors instead of siding with the people and as a result our country fell into the hands of French imperialism.

However, in spite of the humiliating capitulation of the Nguyen rulers, our people continued the fight. Throughout nearly a century of French domination, they constantly upheld the nation's spirit of dauntless struggle, rose up repeatedly and organised insurgent forces against the occupiers. Most notable were the resistance movements led by Truong Cong Dinh, Nguyen Trung Truc . . . in the South, Phan Dinh Phung, Nguyen Thien Thuat, Hoang Hoa Tham in the North. The people together with the insurgent forces fought heroically with new combatants taking the place of fallen ones. However, all those movements ended in failure for want of a judicious line and a sound leadership in the context of the new era.

**The great turning point in national history only came with the birth of the Vietnamese working class and its political party.**

One thing which should be pointed out is that formerly, the foreign aggressors against our country, however strong, remained, like our people, under the feudal regime. Therefore, though they fielded bigger armies, their equipment and weapons were not necessarily more sophisticated, and in some cases, were even less advanced than ours. So, the problem facing our nation and its military organisations was how to use a small force to fight a bigger force, when the two were on the same level with regard to equipment and weaponry.

**Only at present, when we are facing the aggressor armies of imperialism, have our people to solve the question of using a military force with inferior equipment, built on the basis of a backward economy compared with the enemy's, in order to resist and defeat aggressor armies which are not only more numerous but also equipped with more modern weapons.**

The practice of national insurrection and national war in our country with broad mass participation fully substantiates the correct views of dialectical materialism and proletarian military science regarding the role of the masses in history in general and insurrection and war in particular. It also vindicates the general theses of Marxism-Leninism on the question of arming the people and building an



army by the revolutionary classes and oppressed peoples during their insurrections and wars against the rule of the exploiting classes and aggressions by foreign countries.

After the birth of the Vietnamese working class and its vanguard political party, in the light of Marxism-Leninism and the political and military line of our Party, these invaluable traditions and experiences have been continued and developed to a higher level by our Party and people in the new historical conditions in order to defeat the most ferocious aggressors of our times.

**(To Be Continued).**